



For Immediate Release

**WOMEN BUILDING FUTURES CELEBRATES THE FIRST GRADUATING CLASS TOGETHER WITH
NORTH WEST REDWATER PARTNERSHIP AND LOCAL 720**

Job creation partnership welcomes new apprentice ironworkers to Sturgeon Refinery!

EDMONTON – May 19, 2016 – Women Building Futures (WBF), Alberta’s premier trades training organization for women, is pleased to be celebrating the graduation of the first Ironworker Readiness class. WBF joined forces with North West Redwater Partnership (NWR) and the Alberta Ironworkers Apprenticeship and Training Plan (Local 720) in late 2015 to launch the new training program. Today, program partners join together in recognizing the Ironworker graduates now entering Alberta’s workforce at NWR’s Sturgeon Refinery.

“WBF is proud to be part of this innovative partnership that will benefit women, families, industry and Alberta’s economy as a whole,” says JudyLynn Archer, President & CEO of WBF. “It’s amazing what can happen when organizations join forces to create innovative solutions that benefit all stakeholders.”

“These highly skilled women represent the strength, determination and diversity of this great province. Not only will they build the energy infrastructure of Alberta’s future, they have chosen to take hold of their own futures, to do what they love, and to prove any and all nay-sayers wrong. As Energy Minister, they inspire me, as a mother, they inspire me, and as a woman, they inspire me,” said the Honourable Margaret McCuaig-Boyd, Minister of Energy. “Thank you to Women Building Futures, the North West Redwater Partnership, and the Alberta Ironworkers Apprenticeship and Training Plan (Local 720) for creating this program and for recognizing that diverse workplaces are strong workplaces.”

The need for motivated skilled tradespeople in the construction and maintenance of the NWR Sturgeon Refinery, located near Edmonton, Alberta, sparked the creation of this unique partnership. Currently in the midst of Phase 1 construction, the refinery now stands to benefit from the proactive recruitment, training and apprenticeship of these women that has been made possible by WBF and partner organizations, NWR and Local 720.

“It is our pleasure to welcome these talented and dedicated women into the Sturgeon Refinery workforce,” says Ian MacGregor, President and Chairman, NW Refining Inc., a 50 per cent partner in the NWR Partnership. “I feel good about what we been able to achieve through this partnership. This first class of graduates exemplifies exactly who we hope to attract to our team. Albertans with passion, commitment and a focus to the future. We are excited to be able to partner with WBF, Local 720, and the contractors on site, PCL and Fluor, to create job opportunities that truly make a difference to the lives of Albertans. But this is also about more than job creation. This is about being part of something we as Albertans can all be proud of. The Sturgeon Refinery is focused on finding ways to add value to our resources, manage our CO₂ footprint and gain market access. Together, we are building Alberta’s energy future. As construction continues, it is our hope that this first graduating class will be able to stake their claim in the long-lasting and meaningful legacy that this project will leave on our province.”

“Local 720 is thrilled to have played a role in training this graduating class as they develop new skillsets and take control of their future,” says Scott Papineau, Apprenticeship Coordinator/Training Instructor, with Local 720. “The united workforce that is emerging from this unique program is now equipped to contribute to Alberta’s expert workforce and empower and inspire future students who can now follow in their footsteps.”

Tuition for the overall program was provided by NWR, and work experience and employment at NWR’s Sturgeon Refinery was provided in conjunction with their contractors Fluor Canada and PCL Industrial Constructors Inc. Participants were also indentured as Ironworking apprentices with the Alberta Ironworker Apprenticeship and Training Plan, who provided the hands on skill building.

“This program has always been about empowering women and fortifying Alberta’s workforce with skilled, dedicated tradespeople,” says Bill Schneider, Construction Director, Fluor Canada. “We are proud to be supporting WBF, NWR and Local

720 by offering employment at the Sturgeon Refinery to this year's graduating class as they continue succeeding in pursuing non-traditional careers."

"The WBF ironworkers training program is an important next step in a wider effort to help open doors for women in trades. We are pleased to welcome these recent graduates as they join us at PCL on the NWR project site." said Gary Truhn, Vice President and General Manager of PCL Industrial Constructors Inc. "The success of this program should only increase as it gains momentum provincially and continues to promote opportunity and excellence in the ironworking industry and in other trades."

Recruitment for the program began in November 2015, throughout which WBF focused on the engagement of Aboriginal women and women living in communities local to the Sturgeon Refinery.

The program started with WBF's Best Practices for Working in Construction in a Safe and Productive Way, Healthy Choices for Productive Work, Movement Sequencing and She Works: Financial Tool Kit followed by Worksite Safety Certification: Standard First Aid, CPR Level One, CSTS and WHMIS, OSSA Elevated Work Platform, OSSA Fall Protection. Local 720 provided all of the hands-on skill training. Apprenticeship retention and completion support is provided by WBF and Alberta Ironworkers Apprenticeship and Training to ensure the ongoing success of graduates. All Pre-assessment and recruitment efforts were done by WBF including D&A testing and fitness-to-work that were provided in kind through SureHire Occupational Testing.

About Women Building Futures

Women Building Futures (WBF) is Alberta's premier destination for women who want to discover, pursue and advance in a career in trades. A Social Purpose Organization and registered charity, WBF is valued for its uncompromising approach to meeting the needs of women and industry by recruiting the right people, providing them with the right training and matching them with the right employer.

About North West Redwater Partnership

North West Redwater Partnership (NWR) is a 50/50 partnership between NW Refining Inc. and CNUL, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Canadian Natural. NWR is building the world's first bitumen refinery which will combine the already proven processes of gasification technology with an integrated carbon capture and storage solution. The Sturgeon Refinery, which will be located 45 km north-east of Edmonton, is also the first refinery to sell its CO₂ for the purposes of enhanced oil recovery. Phase 1 of the Sturgeon Refinery will convert 79,000 barrels of diluted bitumen directly to fuels and other high value, low carbon products required in the Alberta and world markets. The process is optimized to minimize the environmental footprint of the facility and make bitumen refining sustainable in Alberta. Currently more than 4500 workers are on site for construction with another few thousand in modular and fabrication shops around Edmonton. For more information about NWR, visit www.nwrpartnership.com.

About Ironworkers Local 720

Ironworkers Local 720 achieve a good standard of living and quality of life for our members in all phases of their careers, and for their families, by building a reputation for performance excellence and unsurpassed pride within the ironworker craft. We forge and maintain strong partnerships with Owners and Contractors based on our commitment to provide excellent craftsmanship through safety, productivity and reliability.

It is our mission to ensure a credible and strong collective "voice" for our members in the workplace and the industry. We support and create opportunities for our members to contribute to our communities and our society as a whole. For more information about Local 720, visit <http://www.ironworkers720.com/>.

For further information please contact:

Shauna MacDonald

Brookline Public Relations

Cell: 403-585-4570

Email: smacdonald@brooklinepr.com